UNITED
NATIONS

E

Economic and Social
Council

Distr.
GENERAL

E/CN.4/1994/121
21 February 1994

ENGLISH
Original: ARABIC/FRENCH

COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS
Fiftieth session
Agenda item 4

QUESTION OF THE VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE OCCUPIED ARAB TERRITORIES, INCLUDING PALESTINE

Note verbale dated 15 February 1994 from the Permanent Mission of the League of Arab States to the United Nations Office at Geneva, addressed to the Under-Secretary-General for Human Rights

The Permanent Mission of the League of Arab States to the United Nations Office at Geneva presents its compliments to the Centre for Human Rights and has the honour to transmit herewith the monthly report on Israeli practices in the occupied Palestinian and Arab territories during November and December 1993.

The Permanent Mission of the League of Arab States wishes to express its grave concern at the deterioration in the situation of the Arab civilian population in the territories occupied by Israel, as detailed in the report annexed hereto, and requests the Centre for Human Rights to consider this report as an official document and to distribute it to the members of the Commission on Human Rights at its fiftieth session.

Monthly report on Israeli settlement operations and violations of human rights in the occupied Palestinian territories in November 1993

The Israeli authorities are once again pursuing a policy of procrastination in the negotiations that they are conducting with the Palestinian side concerning the application of the provisions of the agreement of 13 September, particularly in regard to actual withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and the Jericho area, but also in regard to the release of Palestinian detainees held in Israeli prisons.

Some Palestinian circles in the occupied territories believed that the Palestinian-Israeli agreement might be doomed to failure when the time came to apply it as long as basic issues such as the right of return, self-determination and an independent State remained outside the scope of the settlement. Dr. Sami al-Keilani, a member of the Palestinian negotiating delegation, said that the issues of the release of the detainees, the return of the deportees, the lifting of the security cordon and alleviation of the sufferings of the Palestinians should be linked to the course of the current negotiations; he accused Israel of wasting time by evading its obligations in regard to the peace process.

The Israeli settlers continued their military operations under the very eyes of the Israeli occupation troops, who provided them with assistance and turned a blind eye to their acts of terrorism against Palestinian citizens. The settlers carried out several attacks on Palestinians, established roadblocks on the highways between Arab towns and closed more than 50 main roads in various parts of the West Bank and Gaza Strip in accordance with orders received from the Settlement Council in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. They also fired shots and threw stones at Palestinian property and vehicles, attacked Palestinian houses and subjected Palestinians to severe beatings.

Feisal Husseini, the head of the Palestinian negotiating team, called for international protection of the population of the occupied territories following the wave of attacks carried out by settlers against Palestinian property. He warned against the dangerous practices in which the settlers were engaging and described them as being carried out by integrated and organized groups, which gave an idea of what the future might hold in store if they continued to remain in the Palestinian territories.

Mr. Husseini also criticized the Israeli army's remissness in stopping the attacks launched by settlers, in spite of their prior announcement of their intended actions. He said that the army was slow to arrive at locations where settlers were carrying out their deliberate and premeditated acts of reprisal. (Al-Quds, 9/11/1993)

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With regard to violations of the sanctity of mosques, the independent Washington-based "International Solidarity for Human Rights Institute" appealed to the Israeli Government to fulfil its duty by protecting mosques, as sacred places of worship, and putting an end to violations of the sanctity of holy places by soldiers and settlers.

These attacks and violations of the sanctity of holy places by the Israeli occupation authorities and army units during their raids on mosques take the following forms:

(a) Soldiers enter mosques with their weapons and shoes;

(b) Peaceful worshippers in the mosques are terrorized, beaten up and arrested while performing their prayers;

(c) Doors and windows are smashed without justification;

(d) The carpets and furniture inside the mosques are subjected to wanton damage and destruction;

(e) Holy books, and especially the Holy Qur'an, are treated with disrespect;

(f) Loudspeakers are confiscated or destroyed;

(g) Floor tiles are ripped up in several parts of the mosques and numerous holes are dug on the pretext of searching for weapons and political pamphlets;

(h) Bulletin boards and magazines are ripped up;

(i) Provocative slogans that constitute an attack on the sanctity of religion are written on the walls of the mosques;

(j) Raids on mosques are conducted in a violent manner and their doors are ripped off.

The Israeli authorities continued their daily encroachments on Arab land and their acts of aggression against the Arab population. From the beginning of the occupation to the end of November 1993, the Israeli authorities have confiscated a total of 3,082,610 dunums of land in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip. They have also proceeded with their attempts to promote settlement and have prepared plans to encourage Jewish immigrants to settle in the 136 settlements in the West Bank and the 20 settlements in the Gaza Strip.

With regard to violations of the freedoms and basic rights of the population, the Israeli authorities continued to implement their inhuman policies and imposed individual and collective punishments, as illustrated by the sentences passed on 95 residents of the West Bank and Gaza Strip who appeared before the military courts. The sentences ranged from imprisonment for a few months to several years, with heavy fines.

They also issued three administrative detention orders for periods ranging from five to six months, demolished 28 houses, killed 18 Palestinians and injured hundreds of other Palestinians.

The following details concerning Israeli violations were reported in Arabic newspapers published in the city of Jerusalem last November:

I. Confiscation of land and settlement

The Israeli authorities confiscated 380 dunums of land at Beit Iksa/Ramallah for the construction of a settlement road and the establishment of a new settlement. (Al-Quds, 5/11/1993)

Israeli army units seized an area of 20 dunums of land belonging to the village of Beit Lahiya in the Gaza Strip in order to expand the settlement of "Nisanit". (Al-Nahar, 24/11/1993)

The Israeli authorities confiscated 200 dunums of land at the village of Naqoura/Nablus in order to expand the settlement of "Shavei Shomron". (Al-Quds, 26/11/1993)

Construction of settlements

The Israeli authorities intend to confiscate about 3,500 dunums of land at four Palestinian villages (Jib, Beit Hanina, Nabi Samwil and Bir Nabala) in order to implement the "Greater Jerusalem" project which extends from the borders of the settlements of "Givat Zeev" and "Neve Haim" in the west to "Maaleh Adumim" in the east. The authorities claim that they intend to transform these areas of land into nature reserves and public parks.

According to a Palestinian cartographer, by confiscating these areas of land from the Arab villages, the Israeli authorities will have almost put the final touches to the ring of settlements around the city of Jerusalem. (Al-Quds, 14/11/1993)

Since the signature of the Israeli-Palestinian Declaration of Principles, about 3,000 new settlers have moved into existing settlements in the occupied territories where the construction of 1,500 new residential apartments has been completed.

A Palestinian lawyer specialized in defending cases involving confiscated land affirmed that settlement activity in the occupied territories had not ceased for a single day in spite of the signature of the Israeli-Palestinian agreement.

He referred to numerous settlement activities in the districts of Tulkarm, Nablus, Qalqiliya and Salfit. These activities included the following:

Settlers from the settlement of "Eiliya" to the south of Nablus levelled an extensive area of land belonging to the village of Sawiya in order to lay a water pipeline to that settlement.

The Israeli water company Mekorot seized several dunums of land at Jaiyus on which it began to construct water storage tanks for the benefit of the settlement of "Tsofim".

Scores of dunums of land planted with olive trees and belonging to the village of Haris in the district of Tulkarm were bulldozed in order to expand a roundabout from which roads branched off to the settlements of "Ariel", "Barkan" and "Revava".

Settlers from "Elon Moreh" to the east of Nablus seized 20 dunums of land belonging to the village of Izmut, uprooted the trees planted on that area and fenced it off.

Settlers from "Ginot Shomron" near Qalqiliya seized land belonging to a resident of Kafr Laqif, fenced it off, paved it and transformed it into a subsidiary road serving the settlement.

Settlers from "Karnei Shomron" bulldozed an area of land belonging to a resident of the village of Jinsafut in the district of Qalqiliya on the pretext of widening the road leading to the settlement.

Settlement plans and projects

The settlement of "Maaleh Adumim" intends to submit a new plan for the annexation of further areas to the settlement, which has been transformed into a town, so that the settlement areas surrounding "Maaleh Adumim" will be included within the borders of the municipality of Jerusalem. (Al-Quds, 21/11/1993)

The purpose of this plan is to ensure that the Jewish settlement belt is not broken by any salients belonging to the Palestinian self-governing area.

The municipality of "Maaleh Adumim" is seeking approval for its annexation of areas of Palestinian-owned land through a prohibition on Palestinian construction in the area. It also intends to seize and annex land belonging to the villages of Hizma and Anata. (Al-Quds, 6/11/1993)

The Israeli newspaper Jerusalem Post reported that a governmental committee had approved a construction plan to accommodate 70,000 Jewish settlers in the West Bank through the construction of 13,000 housing units in the Jewish districts of East Jerusalem, particularly at the settlements of "Givat Zeev" and "Maaleh Adumim".

Anyone who studies this plan will see that Israel is attempting to create new faits accomplis around the city of Jerusalem before beginning negotiations on the city's future. Israel is also attempting to transform the Palestinians into a minority in the city of Jerusalem and to fragment the main Palestinian residential districts to the north and south of Jerusalem.

With regard to the construction of settlement road No. 60, which is intended to link the district of Jerusalem to the Israeli settlements in

the southern part of the West Bank without passing through Palestinian agglomerations, the occupation authorities are continuing to bulldoze Arab land on both sides of the road.

Information received indicates that the company that is constructing the settlement road has begun a large-scale operation to widen it on both sides and the width of the road has now been increased to more than 100 metres.

The road construction supervisors have begun to erect 7-metre-high retaining walls on both sides of the road, thereby preventing Arab landowners from reaching the road and, consequently, inducing them to abandon their land in view of their inability to exploit it. (Al-Quds, 12/11/1993)

II. Attacks on Arab citizens and their property

During the month of November, various areas in the occupied Palestinian territories were swept by a wave of violence and terrorism unleashed by groups of armed Jewish settlers who wreaked havoc, blocked roads and disrupted the life of the Arab population. They carried out a series of attacks on Palestinian houses, vehicles and other property, in addition to armed and unarmed acts of physical assault.

These attacks by Israeli soldiers and Jewish settlers on Palestinians are illustrated by the following:

During a search of all the houses in the Zeitun area of the Gaza Strip, which lasted a whole day, Israeli troops ordered the population to leave their homes and then rounded up the men, both young and old, whom they insulted and beat up. (Al-Quds, 5/11/1993)

A detachment of Border Police raided the headquarters of the Islamic Association in the town of Gaza and searched all its facilities. (Al-Quds, 6/11/1993)

A group of Jewish settlers attacked Palestinian-owned vehicles, houses and property in the area of the Ibrahimi Shrine in the town of Hebron, where they damaged a number of vehicles and broke the windows of many houses. (Al-Quds, 6/11/1993)

Israeli tax officials raided a shop selling electrical appliances in the town of Tulkarm, from which they confiscated equipment valued at thousands of dollars. (Al-Quds, 6/11/1993)

A group of armed settlers launched an attack on the town of Beit Hanina after blocking the roads leading to the town. They demonstrated in the town, damaged a number of Arab-owned vehicles, raided houses and destroyed furniture. (Al-Quds, 8/11/1993)

A group of armed settlers laid an ambush on the Jericho-Nablus road and fired shots at an Arab vehicle, seriously wounding its driver. (Al-Quds, 9/11/1993)

Settlers damaged three vehicles belonging to Arab residents of the village of Lubban al-Sharqiya. (Al-Quds, 9/11/1993)

Settlers set up roadblocks on the approaches to the village of Burin near the settlement of "Yitzhar" and attacked a large number of Arab vehicles. They also set up similar roadblocks at the crossroads leading to the villages of Masha and Qarawat Bani Hassan. (Al-Quds, 9/11/1993)

Settlers broke the windows of many houses in the villages of Silwad, Lubban al-Gharbiya, Beit Ur, Sinjil, Turmus'aiya, Ram, Beituniya and Mazra'at al-Sharqiya, prevented students from attending school and stopped Arab workers from going to their places of work. At Turmus'aiya, the settlers attacked water storage tanks and houses. (Al-Quds, 9/11/1993)

The Israeli authorities confiscated industrial machines, raw materials and electrical appliances from the Darabeh aluminium factory in the Erez industrial zone in the Gaza Strip. (Al-Quds, 11/11/1993)

Scores of armed settlers from the "Gush Katif" settlements in the Gaza Strip blocked the roads leading to the town of Gaza and prevented Arab workers from travelling to their places of work. (Al-Quds, 9/11/1993)

Armed settlers opened fire on Arab residents of the town of Khan Yunis in the Gaza Strip, seriously wounding two young men. The settlers also attacked Arab farms in the town, destroying crops and several greenhouses. (Al-Quds, 9/11/1993)

Jewish settlers from the "Gush Katif" settlements gave a display of force on several consecutive days in the towns and villages of the district of Gaza. The settlers opened fire at random on Arab residents, damaged and burnt a number of Arab vehicles and attacked, stoned and fired shots at houses and property. (Al-Quds, 8, 9 and 10/11/1993)

Jewish settlers burnt two Arab vehicles in the town of Nablus. (Al-Quds, 10/11/1993)

Hundreds of Jewish settlers responded to an invitation by the Jewish Settlement Council to block Arab roads and disrupt the daily life of 2 million Palestinians. The settlers blocked 49 highways and major and subsidiary roads in the West Bank and Gaza Strip and prevented Arab residents from travelling within their districts. (Al-Quds, 10/11/1993)

Jewish settlers burnt dozens of greenhouses owned by Palestinian farmers in the vicinity of the settlement of "Kfar Darom". A few days later, the settlers launched a similar attack on the area of Deir al-Balah, where they also destroyed greenhouses. (Al-Quds, 10 and 14/11/1993)

Jewish settlers raided the house of a Palestinian resident of Deir al-Balah in the Gaza Strip, stole all the money and jewellery that they found therein and then piled up and set fire to the furniture. (Al-Quds, 12/11/1993)

An armed group of settlers from the settlement of "Kiryat Arba" attacked, insulted and beat up the guards at the Ibrahimi Shrine in the town of Hebron. (Al-Quds, 14/11/1993)

Settlers attacked Palestinians travelling in a vehicle near Jalazone camp, wounding four of them, including one young woman who suffered serious wounds. The settlers carried out these acts under the very eyes of soldiers, who did nothing to stop them. (Al-Quds, 16/11/1993)

Jewish settlers and Israeli troops attacked the Hashimiya school in the town of Bira. The troops opened fire on a group of students, killing one and wounding others. (Al-Quds, 17/11/1993)

A number of settlers from "Kiryat Arba" ran amok in Hebron town centre where they overturned stalls in the commercial market and damaged Arab vehicles. (Al-Quds, 17/11/1993)

Groups of settlers blocked the road from Beit Lahiya to Gaza with burning tyres. They also stoned Palestinian-owned vehicles and beat up their passengers. (Al-Nahar, 17/11/1993)

At Halhul, settlers set fire to three stores, the contents of which were totally consumed by the flames. (Al Quds, 18/11/1993)

Jewish settlers brutally beat up a man and his wife near the Ibrahimi Shrine in the town of Hebron. The man suffered medium injuries and his wife had a miscarriage as a result of the attack. (Al-Quds, 19/11/1993)

A military unit raided the house of the deportee Hammad al-Hasanat in Nuseirat camp and caused wanton damage to its contents. (Al-Quds, 21/11/1993)

Large military detachments surrounded and raided the Taqwa mosque in Bureij camp. They searched the mosque, throwing books and Qur'ans on the ground and breaking the doors and windows. (Al-Quds, 21/11/1993)

Israeli troops opened fire on a group of children in the town of Gaza. Two of the children were wounded, one of them seriously. (Al-Quds, 22/11/1993)

Jewish settlers blocked the Jericho-Jerusalem road on 21 November 1993. (Al-Quds, 22/11/1993)

Four settlers attacked the driver of an ambulance belonging to the Ahli Hospital at Gaza. They beat him up, threw stones at him and broke the windows of his ambulance. (Al-Quds, 28/11/1993)

Jewish settlers fired shots at a Palestinian-owned house in the village of Tuqu'. They broke the windows of the house and the daughter of its owner suffered an eye injury. (Al-Quds, 30/11/1993)

Encroachments on land

The Israeli authorities continued to bulldoze and cut down trees on Palestinian-owned land for the alleged purpose of constructing settlement roads or expanding settlements. These encroachments on Arab land are illustrated by the following:

Settlers uprooted 30 olive trees in the district of Nablus. (Al-Quds, 4/11/1993)

Israeli bulldozers flattened Palestinian-owned land near the settlement of "Har Sina" at Hebron. (Al-Quds, 16/11/1993)

Settlers destroyed crops on a plot of land in the district of Qalqiliya. (Al-Quds, 16/11/1993)

Unknown persons uprooted 60 olive trees on land belonging to the village of Haris in the district of Nablus. (Al-Quds, 17/11/1993)

Troops cut down 300 olive trees at the village of Haris and also bulldozed an area of 20 dunums for the alleged purpose of expanding a settlement. (Al-Quds, 20/11/1993)

Settlers uprooted dozens of fruit-bearing trees in the town of Hebron. (Al-Quds, 21/11/1993)

III. Practices in violation of human rights in the occupied territories

1. Arrests

(a) Mass arrests

Detainees who had recently been released from Megiddo prison said that the occupation authorities were still detaining about 100 young Palestinians under 18 years of age who were suffering from many diseases, some of which required hospital treatment. He estimated the number of detainees who were still being held without trial at more than 800 persons.

During the month of November, scores of young men were arrested in a number of areas. These arrests are illustrated by the following:

Ten students arrested at a school at Bira	(Al-Nahar, 9/11/1993)
Ten Palestinians arrested at Bureij camp	(Al-Quds, 21/11/1993)
Four Palestinians arrested in the city of Jerusalem	(Al-Quds, 29/11/1993)
Thirty-two Palestinians arrested at Khan Yunis	(Al-Quds, 29/11/1993)
Four Palestinians arrested at Gaza	(Al-Quds, 30/11/1993)

(b) Administrative detention

The Israeli authorities placed three Palestinians in administrative detention for periods ranging from three to six months. All of them were from the district of Hebron.

(c) Sentences passed on Arab citizens

In November, Israeli courts passed numerous harsh sentences, ranging from life imprisonment to lesser custodial sentences, on residents of the occupied territories. During the month, 95 Palestinians appeared before Israeli military courts in the occupied territories (as reported in editions of the Al-Quds newspaper published from 2 November to 1 December 1993).

Six Palestinians were sentenced to life imprisonment in addition to the exorbitant fines, amounting on average to 700 Israeli shekels, that are imposed on each convicted person. The total of these fines was estimated at about 61,200 shekels, i.e. about US$ 22,660.

(d) Conditions of detention and ill-treatment of detainees

Female Palestinian prisoners in Tel Mond prison sent a letter to the Mandela Institute and the Red Cross in which they gave an account of the harsh conditions in which they are living. In addition to the diseases from which many are suffering, some of the detainees urgently need surgical operations and others require periodic dialysis. (Al-Nahar, 25/11/1993)

At Juneid prison, the detainees declared a one-day hunger strike in protest against the low standard of medical care available for sick detainees and the delays in provision of the requisite treatment, which are causing suffering and deaths in the detention centres. (Al-Quds, 12/11/1993)

It was learnt that the Palestinian prisoners at Damon prison were suffering from a deterioration in their living conditions inside that detention centre where the detainees are suffering from malnutrition and a low standard of hygiene, including a lack of soap and cleaning materials. (Al-Quds, 10/11/1993)

2. Demolition of houses

During the month, the Israeli authorities demolished 28 houses on the pretext that they lacked a building permit.

In the Tuffah district of Gaza, the authorities demolished seven houses because of the alleged lack of a permit. They also demolished another house at Jerusalem. These houses belonged to the following Palestinians: Ahmad Budeir, Jamal Muhammad, Muhammad Budeir, Awadh Abu Hamdi, Khalid Abu Hamdi, Muhammad Said and Fuad Hussein.

Israeli bulldozers subsequently demolished a further 20 houses in the Tuffah district of Gaza on the pretext of their lack of a permit. That came as a surprise to the owners and occupants of those houses, whose applications for permits had been approved by the Israeli authorities. At gunpoint, the

troops forced the owners of the houses to evacuate them and, when one of the owners refused to leave his house, a soldier shot him in the leg and the wounded man was subsequently arrested. The following list gives the names of the owners of the demolished houses:

Ismail Abdul Rahman Hamad
Ibrahim al-Da'alees
Awadh Ahmad Abu Hamdeh
Jihad Arafat
Umar Yaseen
Jamal al-Qassaboghli
Muhammad Ahmad Eisa
Nadira al-Taweel
Jamal Arafat
Muhammad Said Rouqa
Ahmad Tayyim
Hassan al-Haddad
Mahmoud Eisa
Fatima Abdul Samad
Ahmad al-Na'na'
Muhammad Ismail
Muhammad Mustafa Abdul Qadir
Abed Barakat
Ghazi Jelou
Khalid Hussein Ahmad

(Al-Quds, 18/11/1993)

3. Martyrs

During the month, 18 Palestinians were shot and killed by Israeli soldiers and Jewish settlers, bringing the number of martyrs killed since the beginning of the intifada in 1987 to a total of 1,546 persons. The following list gives the names and places of residence of the martyrs who died during the month:

No.	Name of martyr	Age	Place of residence	Source of report
1.	Salama Youssuf	26	Budrus/Ramallah	Al-Quds, 3/11/1993
2.	Saleem Mahmoud Subeih	-	Tuqu'/Bethlehem	Al-Quds, 9/11/1993
3.	Muhammad Adnan Said	22	Nablus	Al-Quds, 13/11/1993
4.	Iyad Muhammad Awadh	18	Qabalan/Nablus	Al-Nahar, 14/11/1993
5.	Muhammad Judi Burqan	26	Hebron	Al-Quds, 16/11/1993
6.	Rami Izzat Ghazawi	15	Bira	Al-Quds, 17/11/1993
7.	Shadi Muslih Eisa	19	Gaza	Al-Quds, 17/11/1993
8.	Hassan Muhammad al-Sufi	27	Rafah	Al-Quds, 20/11/1993
9.	Mu'in Salah Hussein al-Mubayyid	20	Gaza	Al-Quds, 23/11/1993
10.	Ali Muhammad Ahmad al-Farra	35	Khan Yunis	Al-Quds, 24/11/1993
11.	Abdul Razzaq Shahhadeh	25	Hebron	Al-Quds, 24/11/1993
12.	Imad Aql	24	Gaza	Al-Quds, 25/11/1993
13.	Nidhal Awwad	17	Beit Hanun	Al-Quds, 25/11/1993
14.	Khalid Mahmoud al-Ta'muri	25	Bethlehem	Al-Quds, 27/11/1993

15. Ahmad Abdullah Zaharneh	-	Gaza	Al-Quds, 27/11/1993
16. Ahmad Abu Rish	23	Gaza	Al-Quds, 29/11/1993
17. Farid Tawfiq Muteir	23	Khan Yunis camp	Al-Quds, 30/11/1993
18. Hazim Muhammad Miqdad	15	Gaza	Al-Quds, 1/12/1993

4. Violations against educational institutions

Occupation troops raided the Hashimiya secondary school at Bira, disrupting studies therein. (Al-Nahar, 9/11/1993)

Israeli army units raided the premises of the Islamic University at Gaza and fired shots at the students. (Al-Nahar, 17/11/1993)

The Israeli authorities closed the Hashimiya school at Bira for a period of one week. (Al-Nahar, 17/11/1993)

Monthly report on Israeli settlement operations and violations of human rights in the occupied Palestinian territories in December 1993

The Middle Eastern peace process was put to the test in a manner that cast serious doubt on the credibility of the Israeli Government when that Government refused to abide by the 13 December deadline for the commencement of the withdrawal of its forces from the Gaza and Jericho areas as stipulated in the Palestinian-Israeli Declaration of Principles. The postponement had evident repercussions on the situation in the occupied Palestinian territories where the Palestinian masses expressed their anger and indignation in demonstrations of protest and confrontations with occupation troops.

All the news and reports received from the occupied Palestinian territories concerning the events and developments that those territories witnessed during the last weeks of the year confirmed that the Palestinian intifada, which entered its seventh year on 8 December, was being reinvigorated and was taking a new course that indicated the determination of the Palestinians to continue resisting the Israeli occupation and the military presence of occupation troops until the last soldier had left.

The recent events forced senior Israeli military, intelligence and political leaders to acknowledge that the Palestinian intifada was continuing. It was also a source of concern and embarrassment to them and had induced them to escalate their acts of repression and oppression to such an extent that the scenes observed in the occupied territories were highly reminiscent of the early days and phases of the intifada.

Although the Israeli military forces were supposed to begin their withdrawal, Israeli sources confirmed that the Israeli army had strengthened its forces and was densely deployed in the occupied territories on a scale that was unprecedented in recent years. Yitzhak Rabin, the Israeli Prime Minister and Minister of Defence, admitted that there were about 14,000 Israeli troops in the West Bank and Gaza Strip when he referred to the presence there of 120 military companies in addition to units of the internal security service Shin Beth. The reinforcements included the dispatch of new forces and the intensification of military patrols on the main roads.

During the month, in which many Palestinian national events and particularly the anniversary of the outbreak of the intifada was celebrated, it was observed that the Israeli army had intensified its house-to-house searches and raids, its demolitions of Arab houses and its raids on places of worship. The Israeli army also launched a large-scale campaign of arrests and made extensive use of live ammunition to disperse demonstrations of protest. It is well known that the directives governing the use of firearms by Israeli troops have been eased in recent months, as a result of which one or more Palestinians are usually killed whenever Israeli troops disperse demonstrations or confront stone-throwing children or young men.

One of the principal developments witnessed during the month was the escalation in acts of violence and terrorism by Jewish settlers in the occupied Palestinian territories and their ongoing attacks on Arab citizens and their property under the very eyes of the Israeli army.

A television film taken by a photographer working for an international news agency and which showed Jewish settlers in the district of Hebron firing automatic rifles and pistols at a group of stone-throwing Palestinians, while Israeli soldiers looked on without intervening or fled in the opposite direction, gave rise to violent reactions in Arab and Israeli circles. Israeli Ministers affirmed that the Israeli Government was not serious in its attempts to curb the settlers and that the Israeli army and police were not willing to perform their duty by restraining the settlers due to the absence of explicit orders to that effect from the Israeli Government.

The misgivings felt by the Arab population were increased by reports to the effect that Jewish settlers in the occupied Palestinian territories were seeking to strengthen their military arsenals with new assault weapons and sophisticated military equipment in preparation for the launching of a real war on the Palestinians.

A Jewish settler told a correspondent of the French news agency that the settlers possessed a huge stock of weapons (Al-Quds, 6/12/1993) and one of the leaders of the settlers admitted that groups of settlers were stealing weapons from Israeli army camps and depots.

According to the Israeli expert Ron ben Yeshai, the Israeli Government was permitting settlers to stockpile weapons and each Israeli settlement comprised a store for weapons which were intended for use by the settlers and were not subject to the authority of the Israeli army. Each settler was usually allowed to acquire a pistol, a number of grenades, a United States-made M16 automatic rifle and an Israeli-made sub-machine-gun, in addition to Russian-made automatic rifles. The settlers did not normally require training courses in the use of those weapons, since most of them had served as soldiers in the Israeli army or were still serving in the reserve. (Al-Quds, 10/12/93)

It is noteworthy that, a short time ago, the Israeli authorities revealed that they had arrested one of the senior rabbis of the racist Kach movement while he was attempting to smuggle quantities of weapons and military equipment, including machinery for the manufacture of explosives, timing devices and silencers, as well as night-vision sights and listening devices to

eavesdrop on the communications and movements of the police and other bodies. Israeli sources confirmed that these and other weapons were reaching the hands of clandestine organized groups of settlers seeking to establish armed "militias" and preparing to wage war against the Palestinians as soon as the Israeli forces had withdrawn.

A clandestine Jewish organization calling itself the "Sword of David" actually announced its responsibility for the murder of three young Palestinians near the village of Tarqumiya in the district of Hebron on 10 December 1993. A spokesman for the organization said that it was planning to carry out many other operations and would attack any soldiers or police officers who stood in its way.

At the beginning of the month, the settlers also announced the formation of an armed organization calling itself "Hatikva", which aimed to establish protection units for the settlements in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Israeli law permits a settler to open fire on Arabs if he feels that his life is "endangered". Due to the vagueness of that expression, the settlers regard it as tantamount to a licence to kill. The policy of using live ammunition against Palestinian demonstrators and the campaigns carried out by clandestine units with a view to eliminating "wanted persons" had contributed to an evident increase in tension in the West Bank and Gaza Strip and hundreds of Palestinians had been attacked in their homes, vehicles, schools and places of work. These acts of aggression by settlers against Palestinians took the following forms:

1. Shots fired at Palestinians led to the death of more than six persons during the month.

2. Main and subsidiary roads were blocked with rocks and burning tyres and Palestinians were prevented from travelling to their places of work.

3. Palestinian vehicles, houses and schools were set on fire.

4. Ambulance drivers and firemen were subjected to severe beatings while performing their duties.

It is noteworthy that the number of Palestinians shot and killed by Jewish settlers from 1988 to the end of 1993 amounts to 73 persons of both sexes. Of those, 13 were killed in 1988, 15 in 1989, 12 in 1990, 10 in 1991, 6 in 1992 and 17 in 1993, including 6 killed during the last month, December. (Source: Statement by the Coordinating Committee of Non-Governmental Organizations.)

The Israeli authorities continued their daily encroachments on Arab land and their acts of aggression against the Arab population. From the beginning of the occupation to the end of December 1993, the Israeli authorities have confiscated a total of 3,128,975 dunums of land in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip. They have also proceeded with their attempts to promote settlement and have prepared plans to encourage Jewish immigrants to settle in the 186 settlements in the West Bank and the 20 settlements in the Gaza Strip.

With regard to violations of the freedoms and basic rights of the population, the Israeli authorities continued to implement their inhuman policies and imposed individual and collective punishments, as illustrated by the sentences passed on 100 residents of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip who appeared before the military courts. The sentences ranged from imprisonment for a few months to several years, with heavy fines.

They also issued 15 administrative detention orders for periods ranging from five to six months, demolished four houses, killed 16 Palestinians and injured hundreds of other Palestinians.

The following details concerning Israeli violations were reported in Arabic newspapers published in the city of Jerusalem during the month of December.

I. Confiscation of land and settlement

There was an unprecedented escalation in Israeli encroachments on Arab land in the occupied territories during the month. Land in the district of Ramallah constituted the main target of these attacks, which resulted in the confiscation of more than 33,000 dunums of land in a number of villages in that district.

In the district of Bethlehem, a large area of Palestinian-owned land was confiscated on the pretext of establishing a nature reserve. The authorities fenced off that area of land, using barbed wire and barrels filled with cement.

According to press reports from the occupied territories, the Israeli authorities had begun to resort to a new stratagem to confiscate Arab land on the pretext of establishing "nature reserves" as a first stage before transforming the land into settlements.

The United States State Department protested at the Israeli authorities' continued engagement in intensive settlement construction in Arab Jerusalem, its suburbs and other areas in the West Bank. (Al-Quds, 30/12/1993)

These confiscations, the areas of land involved and the locations at which they took place are recorded below:

The Israeli authorities confiscated 375 dunums of land at the village of Anata in the district of Jerusalem. The authorities intend to use that land to complete the implementation of a plan to encircle Jerusalem and open a road between the "Gush Adumim" settlements of "Maaleh Adumim" and "Shur Adumim" to the east and the settlements of "Pisgat Zeev" and "Neve Yaacov" to the north-east of Jerusalem. (Al-Quds, 6/12/1993)

The Israeli authorities confiscated, for military purposes, a 30-metre-wide strip of land running the entire length of the border between the Gaza Strip and the territories occupied in 1948 (the "Green Line"). (Al-Nahar, 19/12/1993)

The Israeli authorities confiscated 20 dunums of land at the villages of Azzun and Atama in the district of Qalqiliya. (Al-Quds, 19/12/1993)

The Israeli authorities informed the population of the villages of Shaqba, Abud, Rantis, Lubban al-Gharbiya, Qibya, Budrus and Deir Ballut in the district of Ramallah that they had decided to declare 32,500 dunums of land in those villages closed military areas. (Al-Quds, 21/12/1993)

Settlers from the settlement of "Beit El" at Ramallah seized an area of 4 dunums of land belonging to a Palestinian woman and surrounded it with barbed wire. (Al-Quds, 24/12/1993)

The Israeli authorities confiscated 70 dunums of land situated in the Ta'amira area of the district of Bethlehem. That and other extensive areas of land will be used for the establishment of a nature reserve. (Al-Quds, 25/12/1993)

The Israeli authorities confiscated 1,000 dunums of land at the village of Bi'lin in the district of Ramallah. (Al-Quds, 27/12/1993)

The Israeli authorities confiscated 200 dunums of land at the village of Tuqu' in the district of Bethlehem with a view to transforming them into a nature reserve. (Al-Quds, 27/12/1993)

The Israeli authorities confiscated 6,000 dunums of land at Bir Nabala, Jib, Beit Hanina and Nabi Samwil on the pretext of establishing a national park on that land. (Al-Quds, 28/12/1993)

The Israeli authorities confiscated 1,200 dunums of land at the village of Deir Razih on the Hebron-Beersheba road on the pretext of transforming them into a nature reserve. (Al-Nahar), 28/12/1993)

The Israeli authorities confiscated about 5,000 dunums of land in the district of Jericho in order to construct Highway No. 90, which will skirt the town on its eastern side between the self-governing area and the River Jordan. (Al-Quds, 31/12/1993)

Settlement plans and projects

Benyamin Ben-Eliezer, the Israeli Minister of Housing and Construction, revealed that 4,629 settlement housing units had been constructed in the occupied territories during the current year. The Minister's statements, together with those made by Knesset member Dedi Zucker, confirmed that, in spite of the promises made by the Israeli Government, the rate of settlement construction had not been reduced and the Government was continuing to pay millions of shekels in order to support and expand the settlements.

To the north of the town of Hebron, Jewish settlers established a new settlement quarter in the "Kfar Etzion" area near the settlement of "Alon Shvut" on a plot of land covering about 6 dunums. (Al-Quds, 4/12/1993)

A new settlement known as "Pe'at Sedyeh" was officially inaugurated in the "Gush Katif" area. Although this settlement was established several years ago, its settlers had not previously been permitted to move from their mobile homes into fixed homes. (Al-Quds, 16/12/1993)

With regard to settlement road projects, settlers constructed a mountain road leading to their settlement across land belonging to the villages of Qaryut and Lubban al-Sharqiya in the district of Nablus. They also constructed 15 new housing units on that land. (Al-Quds, 4/12/1993)

Jerusalem Municipality's Housing Construction Committee approved a plan to construct 795 settlement housing units in the Ras Ammar quarter to the south-east of "Pisgat Zeev". The purpose of establishing this quarter was to create a settlement extension between Jerusalem and that settlement. (Al-Quds, 11/12/1993)

Israeli settlers announced their intention of establishing 130 new settlements in the occupied territories on 5 January as part of a plan to obstruct the peace negotiations between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization.

A spokesman for the Jewish Settlement Council in the occupied territories affirmed that areas of land had been selected and surveyed during the month and the actual settlement operations would begin in the early part of the coming year, since about 88 settlement nuclei were preparing to occupy those sites within the framework of a plan to double the number of settlements in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip. (Al-Quds, 24 and 25/12/1993)

According to press sources, the Israeli authorities recently began an intensive settlement campaign in the district of Bethlehem comprising the construction of new settlements and the expansion of existing ones, accompanied by extensive land expropriation operations under various pretexts.

Eyewitnesses reported that Israeli bulldozers had begun to level land in the Jabal Abu Ghuneim area near Beit Sahur in preparation for the construction of a new settlement with a planned capacity of 6,000 housing units.

At the same time, the Israeli authorities continued to expand existing settlements. The settlement of "Efrat" was extended deep into land belonging to the village of Artas and Israeli bulldozers also levelled further areas of land belonging to the Arab village of Khadr in the vicinity of the settlement of "Neve Daniel". (Al-Quds, 27/12/1993)

II. Attacks on Arab citizens and their property

The Jewish settlers, enjoying the protection of the Israeli army and police, continued their acts of reprisal against the Arab population of the occupied territories.

The settlers carried out a number of attacks on the persons, houses, vehicles and property of Palestinians.

The attacks by Israeli soldiers and Jewish settlers on Palestinians are illustrated by the following:

Settlers burnt a Palestinian-owned vehicle at Deir al-Hatab in the district of Nablus. (Al-Quds, 3/12/1993)

Settlers opened fire on Palestinians, beat them up and damaged vehicles and houses in the town of Hebron. More than six Palestinians were injured. (Al-Quds, 4/12/1993)

Settlers from the settlement of "Alon Shvut" attacked four houses at the village of Artas in the district of Bethlehem, setting fire to them, ripping off their doors and windows and destroying their furniture. (Al-Quds, 6/12/1993)

Settlers from the settlement of "Kfar Etzion" burnt four houses and destroyed their furniture at a village situated in the vicinity of their settlement in the district of Hebron. (Al-Quds, 7/12/1993)

Settlers threw stones at a Palestinian driving his car near the Nablus road. He suffered medium facial injuries. (Al-Quds, 7/12/1993)

Settlers severely beat up a Palestinian at the village of Awarta in the district of Ramallah. He suffered bruises on various parts of his body. (Al-Quds, 7/12/1993)

The Israeli authorities closed the Meithalun mosque at Jenin for a period of three months on the pretext that prohibited material had been found therein. (Al-Nahar, 7/12/1993)

Following the murder of Israeli settlers at Hebron, hundreds of armed settlers gathered in the streets of the town of Hebron, stoned Arab vehicles and attacked Palestinian houses in the town and also in the towns on Halhul and Si'ir. (Al-Quds, 8/12/1993)

Jewish settlers set fire to a petrol station in the village of Lubban al-Sharqiya. (Al-Quds, 8/12/1993)

Army and police units raided two houses at Gaza, breaking their doors, seizing their contents and subjecting their owners to severe beatings. (Al-Quds, 10/12/1993)

The Israeli authorities prevented the population of the village of Lubban al-Gharbiya in the district of Ramallah from reaching their agricultural lands until they had obtained an official permit from the occupation authorities. (Al-Nahar, 12/12/1993)

In the town of Hebron, settlers burnt several Arab-owned houses, as a result of which many women and children suffered asphyxiation. The owners of the houses were beaten severely. (Al-Quds, 13/12/1993)

Settlers attacked dozens of houses at Hawara in the district of Nablus, throwing stones and firing shots at them in order to terrorize the local population. (Al-Quds, 13/12/1993)

Tax officials accompanied by a detachment of Border Police raided Al-Mahd Export Agency and confiscated the equipment found therein. (Al-Quds, 15/12/1993)

The military governor of the town of Hebron prohibited Arab vehicles from circulating at night from 7 p.m. to 3.30 a.m. (Al-Quds, 17/12/1993)

On the Bira road, settlers threw stones at a number of Arab vehicles, breaking their windows and injuring their occupants. (Al-Quds, 19/12/1993)

Settlers threw stones at Arab property in the Maskubeya and Buweira areas of Hebron. (Al-Quds, 19/12/1993)

Tax collectors, accompanied by a detachment of Border Police, raided the joint headquarters of the Federation of Health and Agricultural Action Committees at Shu'fat, where they confiscated medical appliances and equipment. (Al-Quds, 20/12/1993)

The Israeli authorities recently took measures to harass the imams, guards and muezzins of the Ibrahimi Shrine in the town of Hebron and make it easier for Jewish settlers to run amok and attack Palestinian worshippers. The Higher Islamic Council at Jerusalem accused the Israeli authorities of continuing their attempts to convert the Ibrahimi Shrine into a Jewish synagogue. (Al-Quds, 16/12/1993)

Settlers held a provocative celebration at the Maqam al-Nabi Youssuf mosque in the district of Nablus, claiming to be bringing the Torah into that holy place. Orthodox Jews have frequently attempted to take over the mosque and convert it into a Jewish synagogue and the step that they took is regarded as the start of that process. (Al-Quds, 23/12/1993)

Tax officials raided the Risala printing press at Beit Hanina, confiscated its machinery and equipment and wantonly destroyed the material found on the premises. (Al-Quds, 23/12/1993)

Groups of armed settlers led by the racist Rabbi Moshe Levinger stormed into Shalala Street in the town of Hebron where they provoked the Palestinian population through their armed demonstration and abusive language, after which they opened fire at random with their automatic weapons in the middle of that crowded area. About 50 armed settlers then roamed through the town's streets and began to fire shots at random. Although military vehicles arrived in the area, the troops did not intervene to halt the settlers' attack. (Al-Quds, 24/12/1993)

Occupation forces raided the home of a student of Bir Zeit University at Am'ari camp. After forcing their way inside, they threw percussion grenades, searched the house and destroyed all its contents. (Al-Quds, 28/12/1993)

Settlers threw stones at the house of a resident of the village of Abud in the district of Ramallah, breaking its windows. (Al-Quds, 28/12/1993)

In the town of Hebron, Jewish settlers attacked the house of one of its residents, destroying its contents as well as the owner's car. (Al-Quds, 29/12/1993)

The tax authorities raided the village of Na'im in the district of Hebron, declared a curfew, levied taxes and imposed fines. (Al-Quds, 30/12/1993)

Encroachments on land

The Israeli authorities continued their bulldozing operations and cut down trees on Arab land on the pretext of constructing settlement roads or expanding the borders of settlements. These encroachments are illustrated by the following:

250 olive trees cut down at the village of Nahhalin in the district of Bethlehem. (Al-Quds, 10/12/1993)

250 olive trees cut down at the village of Jaba' in the district of Bethlehem. (Al-Quds, 15/12/1993)

50 olive trees cut down at Kafr Laqif in the district of Tulkarm. (Al-Quds, 19/12/1993)

100 olive trees cut down at Abud and Rantis. (Al-Quds, 24/12/1993)

III. Practices in violation of human rights in the occupied territories

1. Arrests

(a) Mass arrests

The "International Solidarity" institution, which is operating in the field of human rights, affirmed that the Israeli authorities had detained 18 Palestinian deportees from the Gaza Strip on their return from the Marj al-Zuhur camp in southern Lebanon where they had spent a whole year after being deported from their homeland.

Four of those detainees were held for questioning at Majdal and Gaza Central Prisons and seven others were still being held at the Ansar 3 detention centre. Three were placed in administrative detention for a period of six months at Ansar 3 and the fate of the others was unknown. (Al-Quds, 24/12/1993)

During the month, scores of young men were arrested in a number of districts. These mass arrests are illustrated by the following:

Two young men arrested at Jerusalem. (Al-Quds, 5/12/1993)

100 Arab residents of the occupied territories arrested in the district of Tel Aviv on the pretext that they had not obtained entry permits. (Al-Quds, 7/12/1993)

30 persons from various areas of the West Bank arrested and charged with being members of a Palestinian organization. (Al-Quds, 8/12/1993)

44 Palestinians arrested in the Gaza Strip. (Al-Quds, 15 and 18/12/1993)

(b) Administrative detention

During the month, the Israeli authorities placed 15 Palestinians in administrative detention for periods ranging from three to six months. Most of them were from Jalazone camp. (Source: editions of Al-Quds newspaper from 2 December 1993 to 1 January 1994)

(c) Sentences passed on Arab citizens

In December 1993, the Israeli courts handed down numerous harsh sentences, ranging from limited terms of imprisonment to life imprisonment, against residents of the occupied territories.

During the month, 100 Palestinians appeared before Israeli military courts in the occupied territories. (Source: editions of Al-Quds newspaper from 2 December 1993 to 1 January 1994)

Two Palestinians were sentenced to life imprisonment in addition to the exorbitant fines, averaging 700 Israeli shekels, which are imposed on every convicted person. The total of these fines was estimated at about 52,450 shekels, i.e. about US$ 21,700.

(d) Conditions of detention and ill-treatment of detainees

According to sources at the Mandela Foundation for the Welfare of Detainees, four sick Palestinian detainees were still languishing without treatment at Ashkelon Central Prison. Most of them were suffering from chronic diseases and needed urgent surgical operations to save their lives. The Foundation urged the general public to demand their release as soon as possible. (Al-Quds, 12/12/93)

The 240 detainees at Jenin Prison called upon the Israeli authorities to urgently release 10 of their fellow prisoners; half of these were sick and the other half consisted of young persons under 18 years of age. (Al-Quds, 14/12/1993)

It was reported that the Israeli authorities had promised to release all the detainees who were sick or under 18 years of age. Although a few hundred of them were released, reports received from the detention centres indicate that scores of sick persons and minors are still being held in custody.

2. Curfews

For 10 consecutive days, the Israeli authorities imposed a strict curfew on the town of Hebron, the largest town in the southern part of the occupied West Bank, the 120,000 residents of which were not permitted to leave after 6 December following an escalation in confrontations between Palestinians and Jewish settlers.

Abdul Majeed al-Zir, the town's mayor, said that the curfew had a severe impact on the economic, social and health situation of the population and economic sources estimated the daily losses to the town's economy due to the curfew at about US$ 1 million. The town is the principal commercial and economic centre for about 350,000 Palestinians living in the district of Hebron.

3. Demolition of houses

During the month, the Israeli authorities demolished four Palestinian-owned houses in the district of Jerusalem on the pretext that they had been built without a permit. The details of these houses are as follows:

Name of owner of house	Location	Source of report
Salah Fahmi Abu Shafi'	Silwan/Jerusalem	Al-Quds, 17/12/1993
Khidr al-Harbawi	Jerusalem	Al-Quds, 22/12/1993
Hazin Hassan al-Harbawi	Jerusalem	Al-Nahar, 22/12/1993
Shahir Affaneh	Sur Bahir/Jerusalem	Al-Quds, 29/12/1993

4. Martyrs

The Israeli human rights organization Betzelem reported that the number of Palestinians killed during the sixth year of the intifada from December 1992 to December 1993 amounted to 165, of whom 64 were from the West Bank and 101 from the Gaza Strip. The organization noted that the number of martyrs was 36 per cent higher than during the fifth year of the intifada in which 121 Palestinians had been killed.

In its report, the organization went on to say that the number of children killed during the sixth year of the intifada amounted to 42, of whom 14 were under 12 years of age.

The report also indicated that there had been a notable increase in incidents in which Jewish troops had opened fire on Arab vehicles at roadblocks in 1993. Ten incidents of this type had been reported in which 14 Palestinians had been killed and, in 7 of the incidents, the vehicles at which the shots had been fired did not pose any threat to the lives of the Israeli soldiers. (Al-Quds, 10/12/1993)

During the month, there was a notable increase in the number of Palestinians shot and killed by Jewish settlers. Talal al-Bakri was killed in the early part of the month when Jewish settlers shot him from close range.

Eyewitnesses said that he was travelling in an Arab vehicle which settlers stopped at a roadblock that they had set up. When the driver of the vehicle attempted to reverse, the settlers opened fire and the martyr suffered a fatal head wound.

In another incident, Jewish settlers opened fire on the passengers of an Arab vehicle at a crossroads near the village of Beit Aula in the district of Hebron. The vehicle's three passengers, consisting of two brothers and their cousin from the village of Tarqumiya, were killed.

The special units also engaged actively in operations to assassinate Palestinians. Abdul Rahman al-Arouri was killed when soldiers disguised as civilians opened fire on him at close range while he was sitting in front of his house. Mr. al-Arouri was one of the persons whom the Israeli authorities deported to southern Lebanon last year and subsequently permitted to return when it became clear that he had been deported by mistake.

The martyr Basima al-Tamimi died of a severe brain haemorrhage after being beaten up by a female Israeli military conscript in the military court that she was visiting in order to see her detained son.

The total number of male and female Palestinian martyrs who were shot and killed by Israeli soldiers or settlers during the month amounted to 16, bringing the total number of martyrs killed from the beginning of the intifada to the end of December 1993 to 1,562.

The following list contains the names and other particular of the martyrs who died in December:

No.	Name of martyr	Age	Place of residence	Source of report
1.	Talal Rushdi al-Bakri	54	Hebron	Al-Quds, 6/12/1993
2.	Khalid Awadh Shahhadeh	24	Jabalia camp	Al-Quds, 6/12/1993
3.	Basima al-Tamimi	44	Nabi Salih/Ramallah	Al-Quds, 7/12/1993
4.	Abdul Rahman Zeid al-Arouri	32	Aroura/ Ramallah	Al-Quds, 7/12/1993
5.	Muhammad Khamis Abu Awwad	51	Turmus'aiya	Al-Quds, 10/12/1993
6.	Sa'adeh Abdul Mahdi Fatafiteh	29	Tarqumiya	Al-Quds, 11/12/1993
7.	Muhammad Abdul Mahdi Fatafiteh	27	Tarqumiya	Al-Quds, 11/12/1993
8.	Ishaq Mahmoud Fatafiteh	27	Tarqumiya	Al-Quds, 11/12/1993